



Approval Plan Materials And Direct Orders: Differences And Similarities

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to identify several characteristics of scientific and technical monographs received from an approval plan and those selected using direct orders or form selections. The subjects included are applied physics; applied mathematics; electrical/mechanical engineering and technology. Data collected during the years 83-85 were used to find out the distribution by call number, place and year of publication, cost, circulation count and reading level of 478 titles.

The results shown that 85% of the collection studied were used; 29% of books received in the approval plan were of graduate/research level compared to 60% for books selected through direct orders or form selections.

Introduction

In 1977 a study headed by Allen Kent^{1,2} about the use of library materials portrayed a very skeptical picture of american academic libraries; one of the conclusions in this report was that as much as 40% of the books purchased in large academic libraries were never used. It is hard to predict how this study influenced the book market during the last ten years or how funding for academic libraries were affected by its conclusions, but it is important to recognize that this report caught the attention of many in and out side the academic community.

The literature has several works that analyzed the performance of approval plans^{3,4,5,6}. Most of them were done several years ago; none of these studies made direct comparisons of books received through approval plans and books selected through direct orders; and very little has been said about the use of approval plans for engineering and scientific collections.

The advantages of approval plans such as the expeditious delivery of most basic works in a field; the saving on staff time for processing acquisition requests; and the special discount prices provided by vendors are well known by scientific and engineering selectors. This report would try to quantify several characteristics of books selected as direct orders and those received by an approval plan.

Methodology

Approval plan slips, form selection slips and copy of direct orders were collected for the years 83-84 and 84-85. Titles were identified as being of applicable nature for physics and mathematical sciences, also, engineering and technical books related to electrical and mechanical engineering were selected. Items were checked in the LCS library computer system: call numbers, location and circulation status were found. After this information was collected books were examined on the shelves, the reading level for each one was determined and the circulation record was recorded.

Results

Tables 1 to 9 represent in detail the data collected for each category: Approval Plan (APP PLAN), Direct Order (DO) and Form Selection (FS). The three first columns in each table are self explanatory; in column 4 the prices for books were divided into 6 groups, but it is important to know that the cut-off price for APP PLAN books in this case is \$75. In the circulation column NS = Not on the shelf; CO = Checked out; R1 = Reference; R2 = Reserve; and S or M = Missing.

APPLIED PHYSICS
Form Selection
83-85

T=32

Class Number	Country Publ.	Year Publ.	Price Range	Circ. Count	Level
Q 1	USA	15	1982 2	1-10 2	0 5 U 15
QA 1	ENGL	6	1983 30	10-25 8	0-3 12 GR 16
QC 12	W.G.	7		25-50 13	4-10 10 RD
TA 4	SWIS	1		50-75 4	11-20 3 P
TC	DENM	2		75-150 4	21- 1
TH 4	NETH	1		150- 1	NS 6
TJ 1					
TK 7					
TN 1					
TS 1					

TABLE 1



APPLIED PHYSICS
Direct Order
83-85

T=43

Class Number	Country Publ.	Year Publ.	Price Range	Circ. Count	Level
QC 15	USA 33	33 1	1-10 1	0 12	U 10
QD 2	ENGL 7	76 2	10-25 6	0-3 23	GR 31
QH 2	W.G. 1	79 1	25-50 16	4-10 9	RD 1
ML 5	YUGO 1	80 3	50-75 8	11-20 1	P
NA 1	SWED 1	81 3	75-150 12	21-	
T 1		82 14	150-	NS 3	
TA 5		83 10		CO 6	
TD 1		84 8		S 1	
TJ 2		85 1			
TK 5					
TN 3					
TS 1					

TABLE 2

APPLIED PHYSICS
Approval Plan
83-84

T=40

Class Number	Country Publ.	Year Publ.	Price Range	Circ. Count	Level
QA 10	USA 39	82 1	1-10	0 3	U 18
QC 18	ENGL 1	83 26	10-25 7	0-3 15	GR 17
TA 3		84 13	25-50 24	4-10 8	
TC 1			50-75 9	11-20 4	
TJ 3			75-150	21- 1	
TK 4			150	S 1	
TN 1				NS 7	
				CO 3	
				R2 1	

TABLE 3

APPLIED MATH
Form Selection
83-85

T=26

Class Number	Country Publ.	Year Publ.	Price Range	Circ. Count	Level
QA 20	USA 7	82 7	1-10 3	0 9	U 6
HA 1	ENGL 6	83 16	10-25 8	0-3 15	GR 20
HD 1	W.G. 5	84 3	25-50 6	4-10 9	RD
T 1	E.G. 1		50-75 8	11-20	P
TA 2	NETH 2		75-150	21-	
TK 1	HOLL 1		150 1	NS 1	
	DENM 4			CO 1	

TABLE 4

APPLIED MATH
Direct Order
83-85

T=18

Class Number	Country Publ.	Year Publ.	Price Range	Circ. Count	Level
QA 16	USA 10	77 1	1-10 1	0 7	U 4
QC 1	CAN 4	78 2	10-25 7	0-3	GR 14
BF 1	ENGL 4	79 1	25-50 5	4-10 5	RD
		81 3	50-75 2	11-20 2	P
		82 3	75-150 3	21- 1	
		83 3	150-	CO 2	
		84 5		R1 1	

TABLE 5

APPLIED MATH
Approval Plan
83-84

T=66

Class Number	Country Publ.	Year Publ.	Price Range	Circ. Count	Level
QA 56	USA 63	82 2	1-10	0 9	U 26
QC 1	ENGL 3	83 42	10-25 17	0-3 18	GR 26
BF 1		84 22	25-50 42	4-10 13	RD
T 4			50-75 7	11-20 7	P
TA 1			75-150	21- 4	
TL 1			150-	NS 5	
TK 1				CO 19	
RA 1					

TABLE 6

ELEC-MECH ENGRG & TECH
Form Selection
83-85

T=26

Class Number	Country Publ.	Year Publ.	Price Range	Circ. Count	Level
TA 2	USA 21	82 6	1-10 2	0 3	U 16
TJ 9	W.G. 2	83 13	10-25 9	0-3 9	GR 8
TK 12	NETH 2	84 7	25-50 8	4-10 4	RD
QA 1	ENGL 1		50-75 4	11-20 1	P
QC 1			75-150 2	21- 1	
QD 1			150- 1	NS 5	
				CO 3	
				R1 2	
				S 1	

TABLE 7



ELEC-MECH ENGRG & TECH
Direct Order
83-85

T=17

Class Number	Country Publ.	Year Publ.	Price Range	Circ. Count	Level
T 2	USA 15	72 1	1-10	0	U 6
TA 4	ENGL 2	78 1	10-25	1	GR 7
TJ 1		79 1	25-50	12	RD 6
TK 4		81 2	50-75	2	11-20 1
TL 1		82 3	75-150	2	21- 1
TP 1		83 2	150-	NS	2
QA 3		84 6		RI	5
QC 1		85 1		CO	1

TABLE 8

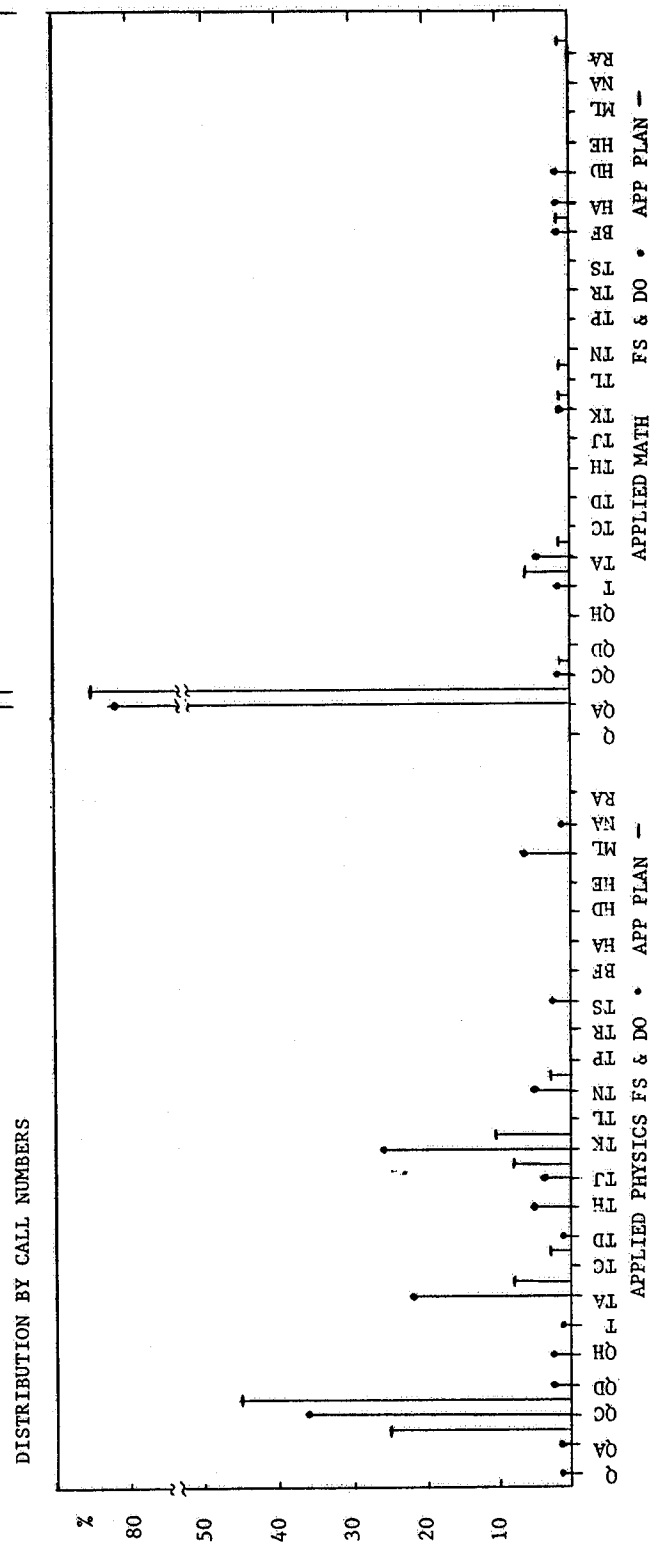
ELEC-MECH ENGRG & TECH
Approval Plan
83-84

T=210

Class Number	Country Publ.	Year Publ.	Price Range	Circ. Count	Level
T 4	USA 191	82 7	1-10	1	0 26 U 117
TA 37	ENGL 19	83 133	10-25	40	0-3 61 GR 49
TH 4		84 70	25-50	136	4-10 65 RD 4
TJ 40			50-75	31	11-20 21 P 9
TK 101			75-150	2	21- 4
TL 1			150-	NS	27
TN 4				CO	21
TP 2				RI	8
TR 1				S	2
TS 6				M	1
QA 7					
QC 2					
HE 1					

TABLE 9

Figures 1 to 6 shows that approval plan titles (APP) are mainly of USA and UK in origin as expected; several european countries are represented on the direct order (DO) and form selection (FS) groups. The cut-off price for this APP is \$75, therefore, more expensive materials were obtained using FS or DO. APP books are current publications; DO & FS materials covered a larger range of years in addition to current publications. The circulation count shows that 15% of all books purchased did not circulate out side the library; approximately half of the number of these books were from the approval plan, the other half were DO or FS books. Most books received in the APP are undergraduate level materials, 71%; while most of the books ordered using DO or FS were of graduate level, 60%.



DISTRIBUTION BY CALL NUMBERS

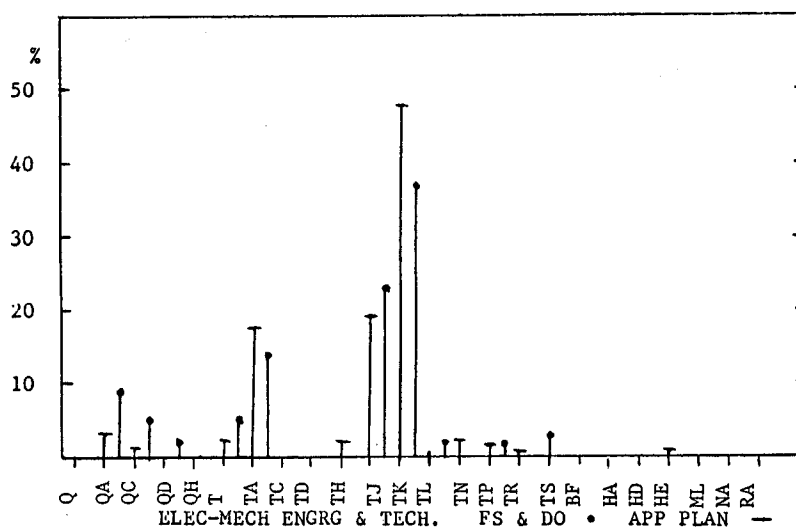


FIGURE 1

DISTRIBUTION BY COUNTRY

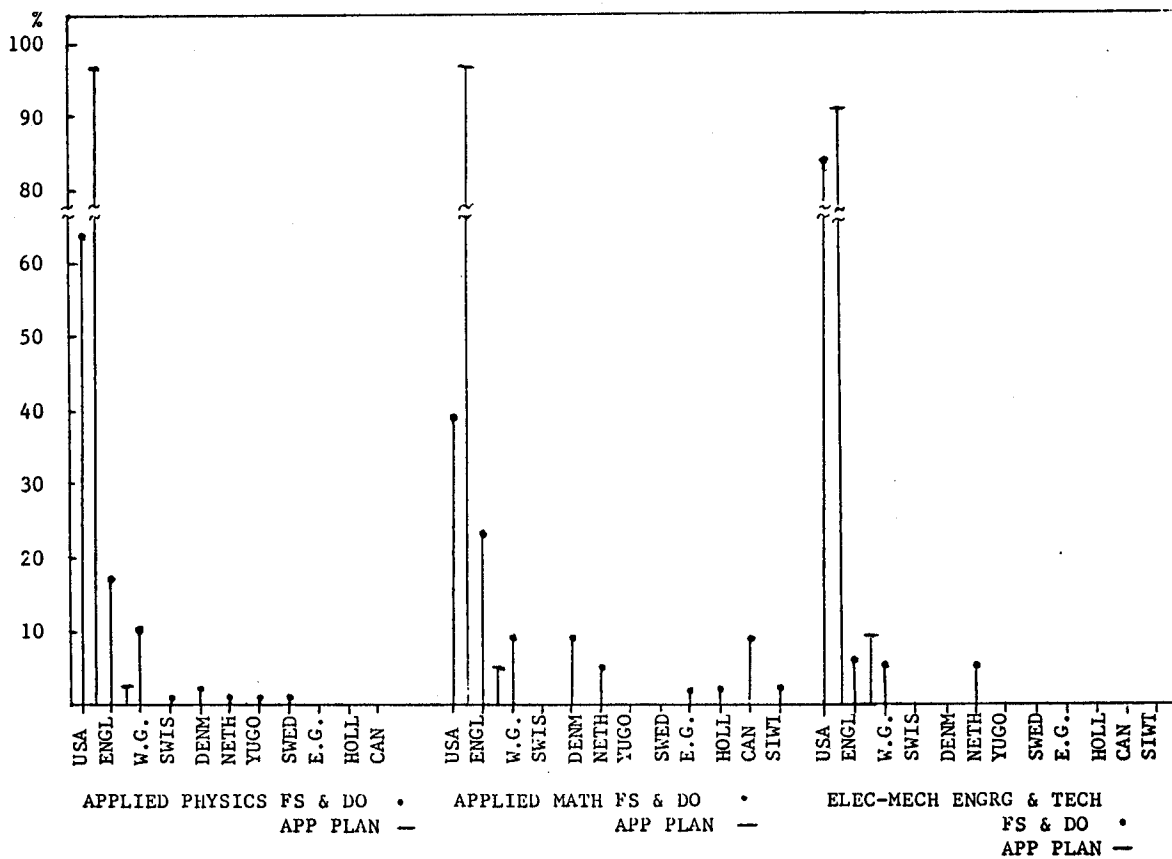


FIGURE 2



DISTRIBUTION BY YEAR OF PUBL.

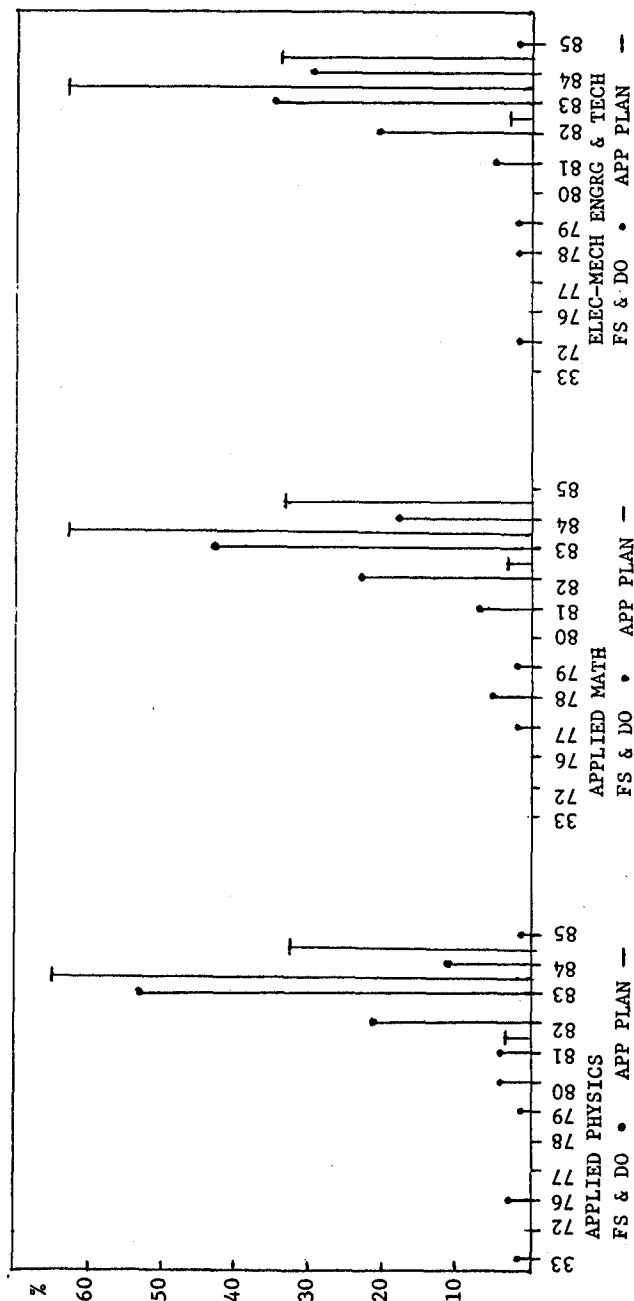


FIGURE 3

DISTRIBUTION BY CIRCULATION COUNT

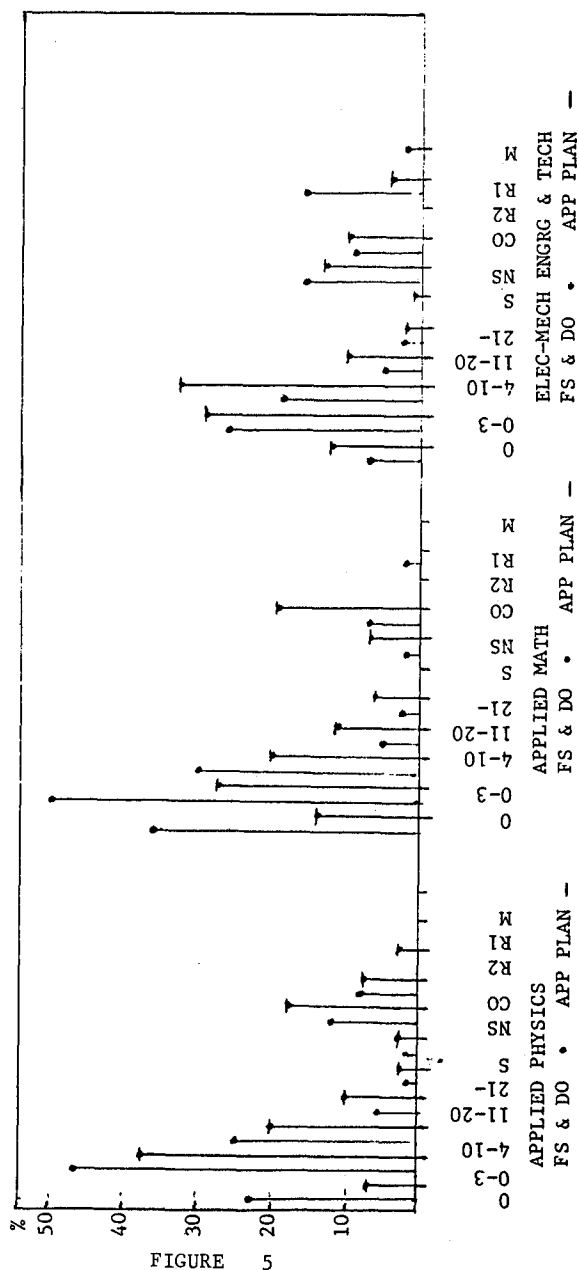


FIGURE 5



DISTRIBUTION BY COST

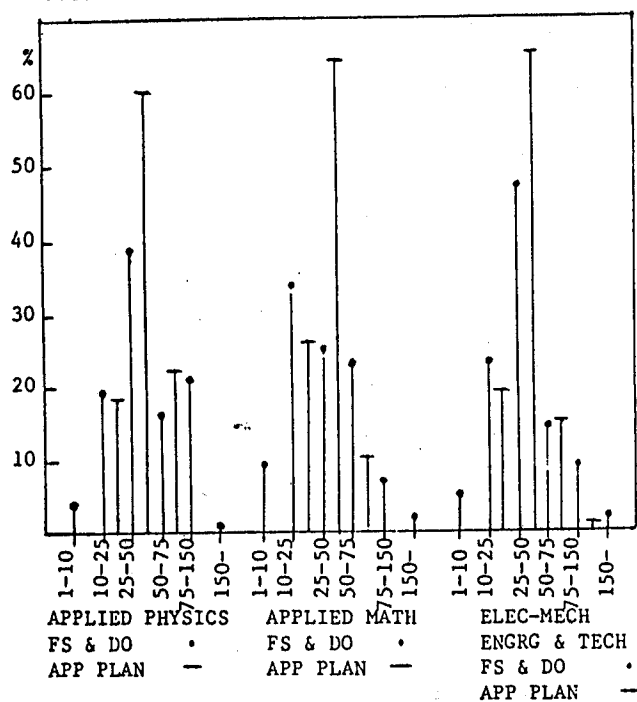


FIGURE 4

DISTRIBUTION BY LEVEL

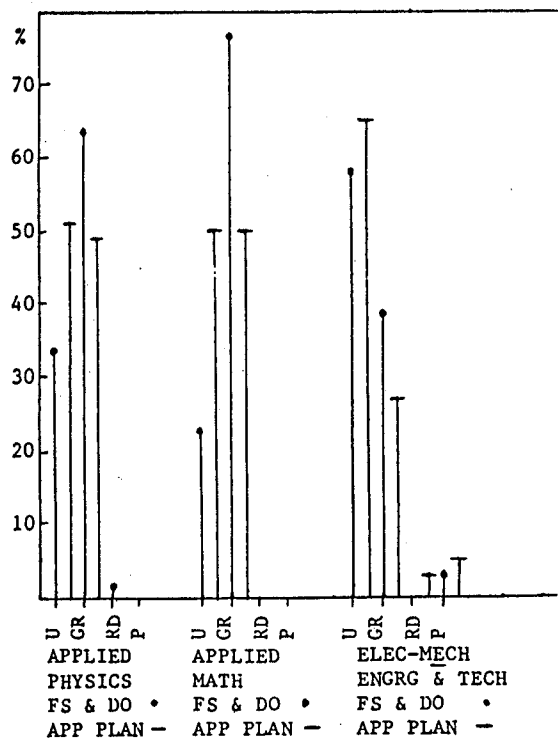


FIGURE 6

In this section a more detailed analysis of titles that did not circulate is presented. Table 10 shows the distribution of these books by subject and whether they are FS, DO or APP PLAN items. Table 11 indicates the call numbers of these 74 books. In Table 12 the number of books that are conference proceedings; part of a monographic series or of foreign imprint is shown. Finally, Figure 13 shows the total number of undergraduate and graduate level titles found for each group in this project.

Zero Circulation Count / Total Number by Subject.

	Applied Physics	Applied Math	Elec-Mech Engrg & Tech	Total
FS	5/32	9/26	3/26	17/84
DO	12/43	7/18	0/17	19/78
APP PLAN	3/40	9/66	26/210	38/316
				74/478

TABLE 10

Zero Circulation Count by Call Numbers

	FS & DO	APP PLAN	TOTAL
QA	15	7	22
TK	1	5	6
TK 7800+	1	9	10
QC	11	1	12
TA	4	11	15
TN	1	1	2
TD	1		1
TJ	2	3	5
TP		1	1
	36	38	74

TABLE 11



Zero Circulation Count
Format & Imprint

	FS & DO	APP PLAN	TOTAL
Conference Proceedings	15	2	17
Monographic Series	18	5	23
Foreign Imprint	21	2	23
Conf. Proc. and Monogr. Series	9	1	10

TABLE 12

Ratio of U/GR level

	APPLIED PHYSICS	APPLIED MATH	ELEC-MECH ENGRG & TECH	TOTAL
FS	15/16	6/20	16/8	37/44 .84
DO	10/31	4/14	6/7	20/52 .38
APP PLAN	18/17	26/26	117/49	161/92 1.75

TABLE 13

Conclusions

Monographs are a very active part of the information process for students and faculty members in the sciences and engineering; the results of this study shows that 85% of all titles surveyed had been used; this figure contrasts drastically with the Pittsburgh Study of 1977. Whether this result is due to the selection and acquisition process used or due to the subject matters covered in the study is something that might require more investigation.

Also, in this particular case APP books had a larger percentage of circulation count and most of them were of undergraduate level, while books selected using DO or FS were for the graduate/research population and had a lower circulation count.

References

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- 5 Hodge, Stanley P. Evaluating the Role and Effectiveness of Approval Plans for Library Collection Development. In: Issues in Acquisitions. Programs & Evaluation., edited by Sul H. Lee. Ann Arbor, MI: The Pierian Press, 1984.
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